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TRENDS

in Communist Propaganda

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CHILEAN ELECTION

PEKING REACTS CAUTIOUSLY AND DELAYEDLY TO ALLENDE VICTORY

Peking waited until 17 September to report and comment, cautiously, on the 4 September electoral victory of leftist coalition candidate Salvador Allende in Chile. An NCM commentary on the 17th, widely broadcast by the Peking radio, avoids any reference to Allende's professed Marxism or to the support he received by the pro-Soviet Chilean Communist Party, describing him simply as the "candidate of the Popular Unity coalition and leader of the socialist party" and ascribing the election outcome to "mass struggles." The commentary also avoids any mention of Allende's public commitment to establish relations with the PRC.

Allende's success posed a dilemma for Peking. Ignoring it entirely would have scorned a development that could afford the PRC a unique opportunity to establish a diplomatic presence in Latin America, while playing it up too enthusiastically would place Peking in the position of approving a product of the "parliamentary road to socialism" which it is on record as opposing.* The NCM commentary thus skirts the tactical aspects, discouraging on Allende's election victory as a product of "struggles" in the form of strikes and land seizures, against a background of mounting Chilean popular opposition to "U.S. imperialism's ruthless oppression, plunder, and exploitation."

NCMA duly notes Allende's failure to win a majority and the consequent necessity for the Chilean congress to choose between Allende and Alessandri. Unlike Havana and Moscow, however, it says nothing about alleged efforts to bar his accession to power.

Consistent with Peking's position on the parliamentary road and its attitude toward the Soviet-backed local communist party, Peking media had carried no comment on the election campaign. But an article appearing in the pro-Peking Chilean publication CAUSA MARXISTA-LENINISTA, edited by NCMA's Chilean correspondent, censured Castro for endorsing the Chilean electoral route to socialism. As trans-

* Peking does not comment frequently on Latin American affairs. But its position on the parliamentary road was spelled out, for example, in a 25 January NCM commentary reviewing Latin American anti-U.S. "struggles" in the sixties. The commentary concluded that Latin American revolutionaries have "gradually realized that only by opposing counter-revolutionary armed force with revolutionary armed force can they completely overthrow the reactionary role of U.S. imperialism and its lackeys." NCMA added that these revolutionaries "firmly repudiated 'peaceful transition,' the 'parliamentary road,' and other fallacies spread by the modern revisionists in an attempt to undermine their armed struggle."

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mitted to Havana in an information dispatch from PRENSA LATINA's Santiago correspondent, the article said "Fidel Castro publicly espouses the opportunist fallacy of 'to socialism through elections,' which has tragically awakened the people who trusted in the pacifist farce."

MOSCOW STRESSES ALLEGED MACHINATIONS TO BAR ALLENDE FROM OFFICE

Soviet comment on the Chilean election outcome continues to depict a concerted effort by U.S. and Chilean "reaction" to keep Allende from assuming office, at the same time emphasizing the Chilean people's determination to frustrate such conspiracies. While some Moscow propaganda has implied that Christian Democratic Party support for Allende in the 24 October congressional vote is almost a foregone conclusion, a 16 September Moscow domestic service commentary by Valentin Mashkin suggested that the issue was far from decided and broached, uncritically, the notion that Allende would have to make concessions to the Christian Democrats in order to gain their support. Observing that the Christian Democratic Party holds in its hands the "key" to the selection of Chile's next president, Mashkin noted that the Christian Democrats were demanding guarantees that Allende will not pursue an ultraleftist course:

The Christian Democratic Party can be defined as one standing to the left of center. Alessandri's line is seen by the party as too far to the right. Allende is more acceptable to them as a politician. However, many of the Christian Democrats are afraid lest Allende stands too far to the left. It is precisely this fear that prompts the Christian Democrats to ask Allende beforehand and obtain guarantees from him that his policies will not be of an extreme left nature.

Commenting that the Christian Democrats are in "a very strong position" to get their way, Mashkin acknowledged obliquely that their aim is to secure guarantees that a democratic system will continue: The party, he said, wants to retain constitutional protection for "freedom of action for the rightwing press and rightwing trade union centers."

HAVANA WARNS OF MILITARY COUP OR OUTSIDE INTERVENTION

Havana comment highlights the possibility of a military coup or an intervention to prevent Allende from taking over the presidency,

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at the same time evoking a threat of Argentine military intervention. Thus a Radio Havana commentary on the 16th, reporting that Argentine army chief General Alejandro Lanusse was visiting Washington, declared that Argentina is acting "as a loyal servant of the Yankee imperialists" and playing the role of a sort of special gendarme to put pressure on neighboring countries having difficulties with popular movements. "It would not be 'strange,'" Havana concluded, for Lanusse "to play a top role in Yankee imperialism's schemes concerning Chile--schemes being denounced by Salvador Allende." In the course of the 1 August interview with Chilean newsmen in which he endorsed the Chilean electoral path to socialism, Castro had warned of alleged U.S. plans to use Brazil and Argentina as policemen on the continent, playing "the same role as that of Thailand in Indochina," but concluded that their intervention in any Latin American country would only precipitate a continental revolution. He also said it was important for Chile to be assured that Peru "cannot be used by imperialism" as a weapon against her. More recently, in a 10 September speech to the Lunas named conference, Cuban Foreign Minister Raul Roa mentioned the Allende victory and remarked that in Latin America "there is no lack of pseudogovernments" that aspire to play the repugnant role of a Latin American Thailand.

PUBLICITY FOR MIR STATEMENT

On the 17th Havana media carried a communiqué issued by the Chilean Movement of the Revolutionary Left (MIR), a Castroite organization dedicated to armed struggle and hostile to the electoral path pursued by the forces it pejoratively terms "the traditional left." While hailing Allende's victory as signifying "a tremendous advance in the political conscience of the workers," the MIR indicated that it would support Allende only if he "takes over without an alliance with the Christian Democrats and without compromising his program." The communiqué indicated that the MIR's faith in the eventual necessity for armed struggle had remained unshaken by the Chilean election. Alleging that Allende's victory has produced "an impasse" between the workers and the landholders and industrialists, it concluded:

This will be resolved only through a confrontation between the rural and urban poor and the holders of riches and power. This confrontation has been put aside for now, but sooner or later it will have to come about, and it will undoubtedly be violent. . . . The armed struggle is today more than ever in force.

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The communiqué stated that the MIR's "armed apparatus" is prepared to contribute to the defense of Allende's electoral victory. There is no available Havana comment on the communiqué.

There had been considerable conflict between the Chilean CP and the MIR during the election campaign, with the communists alleging that the MIR, by provoking violence, was abetting "rightist" plans to prevent an Allende electoral triumph. Radio Havana reported on 31 August that the Chilean CP organ *El SIGLO* had accused the MIR of acting as "a counterrevolutionary agent." According to the broadcast, the paper charged that an MIR statement urging voters to prepare for a general strike and the occupation of plants, as well as to stockpile explosives and firebombs, coincided with "rightwing plans to create chaos and prevent the triumph of the joint leftist candidate." A Santiago radio station reported that Chilean CP Politburo member Orlando Milas, addressing a central committee plenum on the 14th, had offered "amnesty to members of the MIR as long as the MIR militants behave well and do not create new problems."

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